

**Testimony by Peter Visich, DIN: 04A0071**

**New York State Senate Committee on Crime Victims, Crime & Correction Hearing on how  
the Elder Parole and Fair & Timely Parole Bills Will Improve Parole Release Laws &  
Public Safety in NY State.**

I am currently serving a sentence of life without parole; sentenced to death. Every incarcerated individual serving this sentence is effectively told they are incapable of being rehabilitated, there will never be a place for them in a fair and just society. Although a judge makes a declaration and an incarcerated individual is sentenced by "The People of the State of New York," it is unconscionable for anyone to believe the People of this great State could believe any individual is incapable of being rehabilitated. Supporting the People's belief in the power of rehabilitation and a person's ability to change is the fact that every educational, vocational, and especially therapeutic programming offered by the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision is designed and structured to reintegrate and return an incarcerated individual to their community.

Incarcerated Individuals serving disproportionately long sentences are effectively sentenced to death. This must stop!

For the past twelve years I have worked with incarcerated individuals who are developmentally disabled. Ironically, I have been trained and approved by the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision to facilitate and administer rehabilitative programming that I have been deemed unworthy to receive. With the training and experience received while incarcerated, I look forward to serving my community by continuing to work with developmentally disabled individuals.

Enacting and implementing the Elder Parole and the Fair and Timely Parole bills will provide an opportunity for incarcerated individuals to serve as productive members of a fair and just society. These bills will firmly establish the rehabilitative mission of the Department of Corrections and Community Supervision while, most importantly, validating the People's belief in the restorative power of rehabilitation and a person's ability to change.

Thank you,  
Peter Visich